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IN UNITY

THE NEWS AND OPINION JOURNAL OF THE UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES

JUNE / 1977



REVEREND ELDER PERRY ATTENDS WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE

ANITA BRYANT: HUMAN RIGHTS — BUT NOT FOR ALL HUMANS

SAMARITAN THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE: A SPECIAL PHOTO STORY



REV. PERRY AT THE WHITE HOUSE

Nobody yet knows the full impact of the unprecedented March 26 conference in the White House between 14 leaders of the gay community and three members of U.S. President Jimmy Carter's White House staff.

Rev. Troy Perry, Moderator of the Board of Elders of the 105 member Universal Fellowship of MCC's, was there. Almost two months after the historic meeting his evaluation was that "our time to act is now. If pressure is placed on the Carter administration to help bring about a change in the American society, the enacted sex laws will be dropped from the American sexual code within the next five years. I believe President Carter's stand on human rights is sincere."

The immediate result of the meeting was a firm commitment from a top

Please turn to page 12





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INSIDE IN UNITY

Editorial comment by Richard R. Mickley

In March I had what had to be one of the peak experiences of my life — four hours alone with one of the nicest persons in the world, a man who is recognized as one of the world's foremost theologians, the author of sixty-six books, a person who has lectured from here to Kingdom Come, and certainly one of the most loveable persons I have ever known. Dr. Norman Pittenger is one of my favorite people — and I had the privilege to be with him for four delightful hours.

He was in Denver and I went to Denver to go over with him the final details on the manuscript of his new book which the Universal Fellowship Press will be publishing and releasing in Denver on August 1st. *Gay Lifestyles: A Christian Interpretation* is not just another book about gay people. It's an astonishingly frank and lucid book about the gay *Christian* lifestyle by an astoundingly illustrious person. If I sound a little biased, believe me, it's an understatement.

I have to admit it. I am biased. But you will have to read the book for yourself to find out that *Gay Lifestyles* gets to the heart of the matter. It will be the book to give to anyone you wish you could make understand everything you ever wanted to get across to them about being gay and Christian.

The book will be released at the MCC General Conference in Denver. At the Fellowship offices, we are all quite excited about his forthcoming book. We've been busy editing, typesetting, planning art work, promoting, and planning the printing and distribution. We've been in close touch with Dr. Pittenger and even though he's had sixty-six books published, he, too, seems excited about this one.

IN UNITY readers, whether they are delegates or MCC members or not, will find Denver the place to be during the whole first week of August, 1977. The MCC General Conference will be the main attraction. (I've inspected the Cosmopolitan Hotel, by the way, and find it beautiful, atmospheric, comfortable, clean, and appropriate for a great General Conference.) Its bookstore is going to be the most unique, best stocked, and most complete ever. (Everybody should come prepared to find something that they will want.)

Besides Dr. Pittenger's brand new book, *Gay Lifestyles: A Christian Interpretation*, one of the books available will be *Loving Someone Gay*, by Dr. Don Clark, which is a marvelous book and a perfect twin for *Gay Lifestyles*, but more directed to the Christian perspective. I learned about it through an interesting experience. It was in Denver. I went to hear Dr. Pittenger lecture on homosexuality at the Iliff School of Theology. I rode over with Father Tom, the Conventor of Integrity in Denver. He showed me the book, *Loving Someone Gay* which had just been released by the publisher. I immediately recognized it to be a valuable book for helping family and friends understand about being gay.

During the break between the lecture and the discussion period, I was talking in the back of the lecture hall with some people who were purchasing the pamphlet, "Homosexuals and the Bible" by Dr. Pittenger, which is published by the Universal Fellowship Press, and I heard Dr. Pittenger calling me. I went to him and he asked me if I would counsel a woman who had just discovered that her husband is homosexual. There wasn't much I could say in the few minutes that we had, but I told her about *Loving Someone Gay*. Since then I've had a chance to read it and I know it was the best thing I could have directed her to in print at this time. In turn, by the way, she turned me on to a novel she had been reading, *Elsinor*, by Charles Webb, author of *The Graduate*, which has a theme about a woman whose husband is involved with another man. (This book also will be available at the General Conference bookstore.)

Now I don't want to give the impression that the bookstore is the only thing going on at General Conference in Denver the first week of August, but I do want to make it clear that it alone might well be worth the trip. ●





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IN UNITY

Vol. VII / Num. 2

The Gay Christian was published in Volumn VII, Number 1, and will be published again in the next issue of IN UNITY.

June / 1977

IN THIS ISSUE:

Rev. Perry at the White House — 2
Samaritan Theological Institute — 5

A photo story

Anita Bryant: The "Perfect" Opponent — 9
But Pastor, Why . . . — 10

Rev. Elder Carol Cureton
Fellowship In Unity — 14

Church news and events

Letters to the Editor — 24
Institutional Ministry — 27
Hymnal Committee — 27

And Much More!

UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP PRESS
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ANNOUNCING:

A NEW BOOK BY NORMAN PITTENGER!

Dr. Pittenger, the author of over 60 books, world famous theologian, seminary professor for nearly half a century, needs no introduction.

But THIS is to introduce his newest book:

Gay Lifestyles.

A Christian Interpretation of Homosexuality and the Homosexual

This book will be published by the Universal Fellowship Press
on August 1, 1977

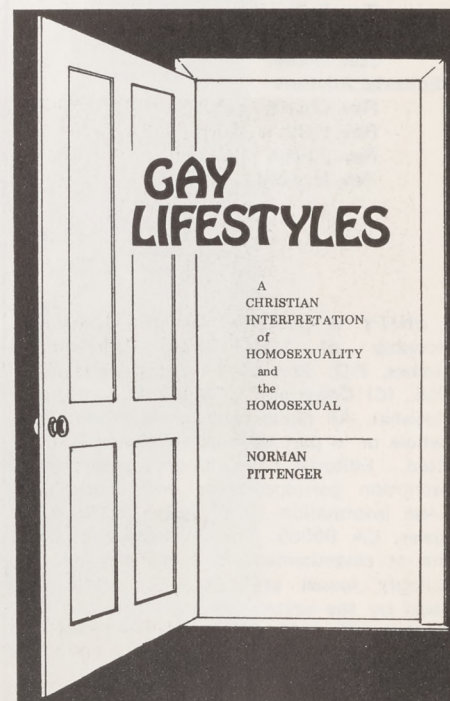
Dr. Pittenger deals with the following topics in his new book:

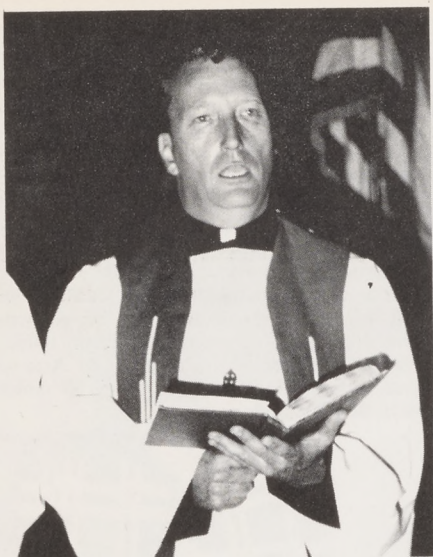
- 1) "Who are homosexuals?"
- 2) "The meaning of being human"
- 3) "The homosexual lifestyle"
- 4) "Homosexual relationships"
- 5) "Society's attitudes"
- ✱ 6) "Homosexuals and the Bible"
- 7) "On coming out"
- 8) "Homosexual unions and fidelity"
- 9) "A Christian interpretation of homosexuality"

* This chapter is NOW available
as a pamphlet.



The pamphlet "Homosexuals and the Bible" may be ordered in quantity [five or more] for \$50 each. Please note that bookstore, resale, or quantity orders qualify for trade discount on all Universal Fellowship Press books.





The Rev. Richard Ploen, founder and one of the first teachers of Samaritan Theological Institute.
photo by Peter Taylor

SAMARITAN THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

SHARING THE FELLOWSHIP'S SCHOOL WITH THE FELLOWSHIP'S PEOPLE

IF ONE PICTURE IS WORTH a thousand words, then hopefully these photographs of Samaritan Theological Institute will tell you more about the school and its activities than the same number of pages in print!

The Institute has grown tremendously in the last year for two very good reasons: first, the dedication and hard work of the Trustees, the faculty and the students and, second, the concern and support of the school's benefactors — the women and men of the local congregations of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.

Everyone at Samaritan is committed to making the school even better in the years ahead, and it is the hope of all at STI that men and women throughout MCC will continue to support the Institute in prayer, promotion and financial assistance.

HOW YOU CAN HELP SAMARITAN

— Become a benefactor of the school; your cheque in any amount helps insure the growth and continued service of the Institute. Cheques should be made payable to: *Samaritan Theological Institute*, and should be sent to: P.O.B. 5570, Los Angeles, California, 90055.

— Encourage your friends to become benefactors of the school.

— In consultation with, and with the permission of your Pastor and Board of Directors, begin a Samaritan Support Group in your congregation. SSGs are groups of people in local congregations who covenant together to pray for Samaritan, and to undertake various projects over a period of a year to raise funds for the Institute. Write to the school for ideas for your SSG.

— Encourage prospective students to consider Samaritan Theological Institute for their ministerial preparation.

— Pray incessantly!

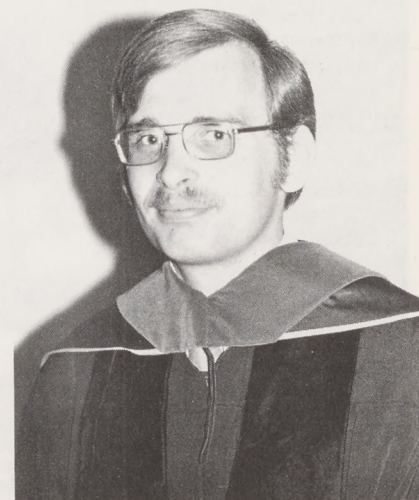
"There's no school like Samaritan, because there's no church like MCC."



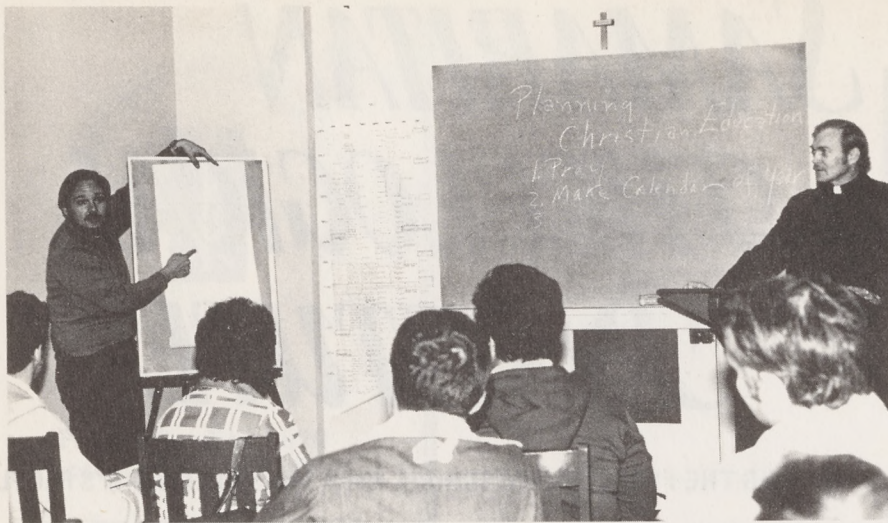
Ms. Karen Wheeler, President
photo by Peter Taylor



The STI faculty meets together regularly to discuss and coordinate the work of the various departments, to plan teaching activities, and to share ideas.
photo by Peter Taylor



The Rev. Jeffrey Pulling, Dean
photo by Peter Taylor



The Rev. Bob Arthur and The Rev. Richard Mickley lead a class in Christian Education. Team teaching is one of the methods used at Samaritan to share with students the knowledge and experience of many of the faculty members. This particular class was, among other things, designed to familiarize students with the wide variety of audio-visual resources available to pastors and educators today, and to acquaint the students with the potential usefulness of these resources as a means of communicating the Gospel. Rev. Mickley received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Dayton (Ohio); Rev. Arthur received his Master of Arts degree from Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina.

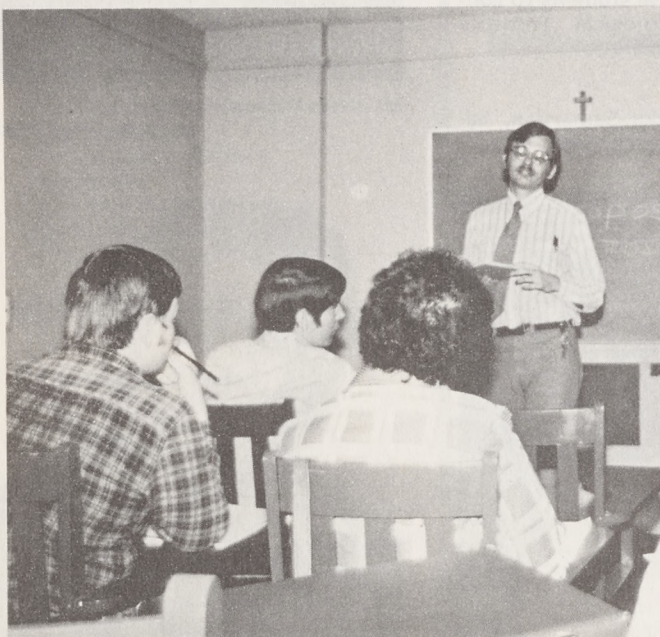
photo by Peter Taylor

**"They that teach,
let them be at their teaching..."**

Romans 12:7

The Rev. Larry Bernier lectures in Early Church History. Prior to this past year Church History courses were not a part of the curriculum at Samaritan, but now a full program covering events from the foundations of the Church to the present is available in four broad, survey-type courses and various concentrated electives. Rev. Bernier received his Associate of Arts degree from Quinsigamond Community College in Worcester, Massachusetts.

photo by Peter Taylor



Nothing is ever wasted at Samaritan, and that goes for a person's talents also. Every faculty member has other church-related jobs and all of the faculty devote many hours of time to Institute projects over and above their teaching responsibilities. The Rev. Jeffrey Pulling is the Dean of the Institute; he also teaches, among other subjects, New Testament Greek. Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced classes are offered in this Biblical language.

photo by Peter Taylor



Classes vary in size at the Institute from small groups with plenty of student-teacher interaction to larger groups with a lecture format. Samaritan tries to incorporate both the best of traditional teaching methods and the best of recent educational techniques. At present, the small size of the school is to its advantage in that teachers may spend more time with and work more closely with individual students than is possible at a larger school.

photo by Peter Taylor



Convocation worship is held in the Spring and Autumn of each school year. Trustees, faculty and students, their spouses and friends, as well as friends and supporters of the Institute gather together to seek God's help and guidance at the beginning of each quarter, and on frequent other occasions. The Institute shares a small 30 seat chapel with the staff of Fellowship Headquarters; this chapel is part of the Samaritan facilities.

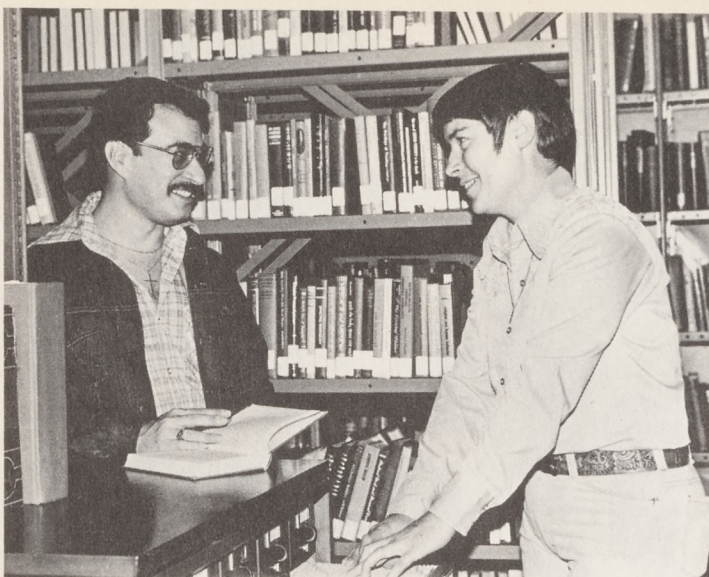
**"God is Spirit, and those worshipping,
must worship God in Spirit and truth."**

John 4:24

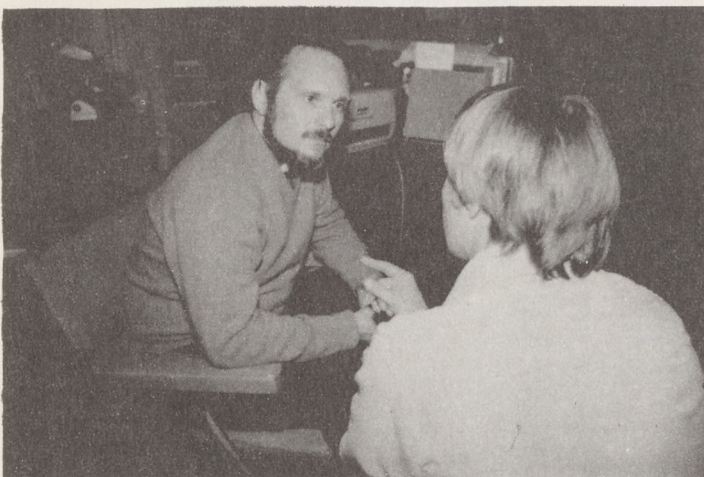
Ms. Karen Wheeler, President of the Institute, delivered the message at Spring Convocation worship. In addition to her administrative responsibilities, Karen also teaches courses in Homiletics/Public Speaking. She is an Exhorter at Trinity MCC in Riverside/San Bernardino, California and a candidate for License in the UFMCC. Ms. Wheeler received her Master of Arts degree at California State University in Fullerton, California.



Today, the students receive the sacrament of Holy Communion from minister/teachers, all of whom have had extensive experience in the field — many of them as founding pastors of Fellowship churches. Someday, many of these same students will administer the sacrament to their brothers and sisters in congregations throughout the Universal Fellowship.



Faculty members try always to make themselves available to students for counselling, consultation, or just plain "rapping". Vocational guidance is available to students in the planning of their course work, and a Clinical-Pastoral Education program is in the planning stages.



There is a student Body Organization at the Institute, and students — despite their busy schedules — find time to enjoy social activities together, work on student projects, and share in student-faculty discussions.



All photos by Peter Taylor

The Institute is fortunate to have available to students and faculty a theological library of over 3000 volumes. This library began because of the vision and foresight of The Rev. Richard Ploen, the school's founder, who solicited the first donations of needed books. The library has grown over the years by donations of books from other theological libraries, from MCC congregations, and from individuals, as well as through the purchase of a limited number of new books. The Samaritan Library is in the process of being catalogued according to the Library of Congress system; about half of the books are catalogued at present. The library also has a small student study area.

UPDATE...

Gay rights went down in Dade County by a 2-1 vote on June 7.

Rev. Perry returned to Los Angeles June 6 saying it was the most explosive situation he had ever been in. He debated the pastor of Anita Bryant, but never met the defiant Ms. Bryant who had been on-again, off-again several times in accepting-rejecting Rev. Perry's invitation to debate.

Meanwhile in Los Angeles a jubilant Police Chief Ed Davis was claiming, "heterosexuals have rights, too." Gay people planned demonstrations in many American cities.

Please turn to page 24

Anita Bryant has been called "the perfect opponent" by gay rights activists. Her national prominence insures national news coverage.

One nationally known leader in the homophile community said, "Anita Bryant has done more for gay rights than any other person in human history, except Jesus Christ."

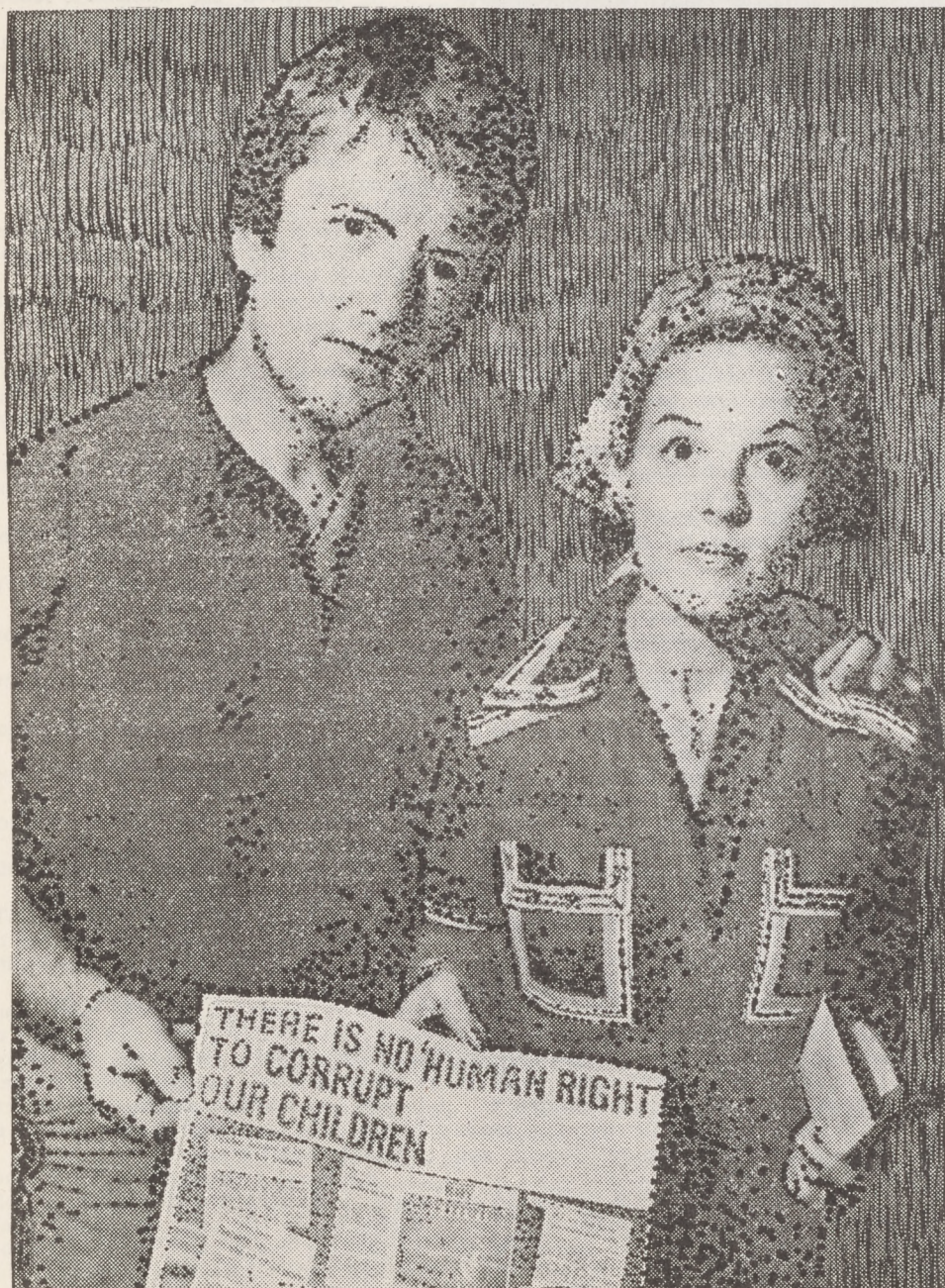
What is the 37 year old former Miss Oklahoma, religious recording star, and current Florida orange juice commercial singer, so vocal about? It's a law prohibiting discrimination against homosexuals in housing, public accommodations, and employment passed in January in Dade County Florida, affecting gay people in Miami, Miami Beach, Coconut Grove, and Coral Gables. The singer testified against the law at a hearing while it was under consideration, but the ordinance passed 5-3 and Anita vowed to get it repealed.

The National Gay Task Force says, "her 'save our children' campaign vividly demonstrates just why gay rights laws are needed — in order to protect our people against the sort of ignorant, irrational, unjustifiable prejudice typified by Anita Bryant."

Persons who have a different interpretation of what gay rights are, such as the Libertarians, are opposed to her approach, but agree with her objective. The Rev. Robert Sirico, Chairperson of the California Libertarians for Gay Rights, made this statement, "Anita Bryant is wrong in trying to legislate morality; she is wrong in trying to violate the property rights of gay people; she is wrong in her opposition to the homosexual life style, wanting to make it illegal for us to do with our bodies what we want; she is wrong in her theology and use of Scripture against homosexuals; she is wrong in wanting to make gay love illegal. The real question is: can we tell a private business owner what to do with their property, the jobs they have to offer? If this law remains and it enforced equally, it would mean a gay business would have to hire, say, Ed Davis, if he applied as a qualified applicant."

Some observers have noted that in the early stages of the campaign Bryant was more rabid and irrational in her approach, making allegations such as: the homosexuals can't reproduce (to increase their numbers), so they are out to recruit our children (who are) surging with sexual awareness. More recently she has softened her approach, they say,

THE "PERFECT" OPPONENT



Anita Bryant and husband Bob Green

Please turn to page 11

MISUSE of BIBLE DEPLORED

Gay religious leaders and advocates from more than a dozen denominations throughout the United States and Canada today sent an open letter to Anita Bryant deploring her misleading use of scripture and scare tactics in fighting civil liberties for gay people.

The interdenominational group specifically condemned her "Save Our Children" crusade to overturn a recently-passed ordinance in Dade County, FL, which extends civil rights to gay persons.

"We, too, believe we must "Save Our Children". Many of us have children, and all of us are children of God created to love and living in faith that God has set us free from fear through our Saviour, Christ Jesus," the letter states.

"We pray that our children will learn from our faith that their God is a God of justice, love and peace.

"We abhor your use of Holy Scripture, the Word of God, which teaches us of God's love for all, being used as a tool for the continuance of oppression of God's children."

"We object to the use of fear and ignorance as a planned part of your strategy. We believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ and its teachings and find your methods incompatible with our understanding of Christian teaching."

The letter was endorsed by the 85 participants at a conference on Christianity, gays and the church at Kirkridge, a retreat center 25 miles north of Allentown, PA.

Participants included gay and nongay women and men, members of the clergy and laity, blacks and whites, married and single persons.

Speakers at and resource leaders at the two-day conference included Malcolm Boyd, Episcopal priest and author; Nancy Krody, coordinator of the Gay Caucus of the United Church of Christ; and Father John McNeill, S.J., author of *The Church and the Homosexual*.

Attending were members of the following religious organizations: Brethren/Mennonite Gay Caucus, Dignity (Roman Catholic), Evangelicals Concerned, Integrity (Episcopal), Lutherans Concerned for Gay People, Presbyterian Gay Caucus, Unitarian Gay Caucus, United Church of Christ Gay Caucus, United Methodist Gay Caucus, and the Universal Fellowship of the Metropolitan Community Churches. ●

BUT PASTOR, WHY...

by Rev. Elder Carol Cureton

Did you know that the Pastor works more than just during the Sunday and Wednesday services? Many people don't know that...not that they think the Pastor is lazy, but they just have no idea what the "average" day is like in the Church. For those of you who can not spend a day at church with me, I have captured a day for you on paper:

The official day begins at the post office where the mail is picked up at 8:30 a.m. and the trip to the church during rush hour traffic brings us to 9:00 very quickly. When I arrived at the building, I found the church clerk busy typing away so we talked for a few minutes about the preparation of the upcoming Annual Reports.

At 9:15 I began reviewing the mail and answering the correspondence. For your information, the following things were completed:

- Read eight church newsletters
- Received and routed a notice of a meeting that must be attended later in the week

- Received and answered a letter concerning membership in the Missouri Council of Churches

- Reviewed and routed a notice from the Missouri Interfaith Commission on Aging

- Reviewed two new church and office supply catalogs and compared current purchase prices in an effort to save money

- Reviewed information from "Population Institute"

- Reviewed information sent to us from the Salvation Army

- Received and answered a letter from an individual who attends the church and was seeking help

- Read and clipped information from an evangelism magazine

- Received and answered a letter from another minister who requested help

- Reviewed and clipped pertinent information on Anita Bryant's campaign against gay people

- Reviewed and answered questionnaire on the ministry to the handicapped

- Sent letter of "thank you" to three people working around church

- Received and answered a letter from a current seminary student and prospective MCC Minister

- Responded to an invitation to attend a minister's installation

- Responded to an invitation to attend a Holy Union

- Responded to request for advice on developing an exhorter's plan of study

- Reviewed six minister's report forms and and four church reports

- Listened to a half hour cassette tape report from a field exhorter and taped a reply

- Received and answered two letters from ministers in the Fellowship

- Answered a questionnaire on our ministry to Transsexuals and/or Transvestites

- Took three walk-in conferences with friends and members of the church who were seeking assistance

- Counseled an Exhorter on his future plans and preparation for the ministry

- During the course of the day I answered ten phone calls (not counting the 19 handled by the church secretary) including:

- one referral to a physician
- one request for transportation to service

- one phone counseling session

- one call from the VD Clinic

- two calls wanting to know how to save a relationship

- three calls wanting to know how to break up with a lover

- one member demanding that I find him a job

- Prepared an article for the *New Light*

- Helped someone with the mimeo machine

- Talked with a committee chairperson about the annual report

- AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, I talked with a member who wants to start a business supplying specialty products to MCC Groups

That brings us to 5:15 p.m. (and where has the day gone!) and it's time to take the out-going mail to the post office. I left church then and went home where I helped entertain a deacon and an exhorter who we invited to dinner to celebrate their birthdays.

As I was retiring about 10:30 that night, I remembered that I had a Holy Union to do the next day...and there's a speaking engagement over in Illinois ...and I didn't have time to prepare for the service tomorrow...and...and...most of all "Thank you Lord, for my life...it's never dull!!" ●

with references to nice homosexuals she has known ("Some of my best friends are...") even allowing that "they" should be allowed certain human rights.

No other issue has stirred so much publicity. Even the historic meeting of 14 gay leaders in the White House, reported on network TV and in all the press, was overshadowed by the on-going ubiquitous coverage and commentary on the Anita Bryant campaign. Her name became a household word — associated with gay rights, negatively, but raising the consciousness of millions who had never thought of such a thing.

Cartoons popped up everywhere. Columnists and reporters, gagsters and news commentators, letters to the editor and interviews on the street — perhaps only the President of the United States received so much publicity (and that's doubtful). Gays across the country wore T-shirts spoofing the orange juicer. Bumper stickers stuck out everywhere.

Fund raising events were held by gay groups across the country to raise money to help the coalition in Dade County working to counteract the anti-gay efforts of Bryant and many of the churches there. Actress Jane Fonda and her husband, the former U.S. Senate candidate, Tom Hayden, wired one such event, "Sorry we can't be with you. We encourage the fight against the bigotry rising in Dade County Florida. It is encouraging to see voices and money raised all over America from all kinds of people to stop the reactionaries before their revival of persecution spreads like a plague to the whole country."

MCC's Board of Elders passed a resolution opposing the "song" of the singer: Dave Kopay and Leonard Matlovich spoke out. David Goodstein editorialized. Rod McKuen jumped into the fray, lending his prestigious name and talent on the side of gay rights, pledging to work full time for several weeks. Rev. Perry prepared to spend a week in Dade County challenging Ms. Bryant to a debate.

Meanwhile, Norman Lear, producer of many successful television series, has contributed \$25,000 in services to help the gay community in its battle against those who display "Kill a Queer for Christ" bumper stickers. (Incidentally, that very thing happened in Tucson, AZ recently. A gay man was beaten to death by a 17 year old who gave as his motivation: "That's the way I was taught.") And so the battle goes on to "Save our Children." A Los Angeles Times columnist concludes a recent column: "Even in these barbaric times, it is difficult to



...and so you see, little bunny, she thought she was "saving" little children, while what she was really doing was teaching them hate and bigotry. Fortunately, she was the last of her breed and now we can all live in peace because we chose to let Jesus save us instead of Anita.

imagine a popular exhortation to "Kill a Nigger" — or a kike, or a broad. Yet, in Dade County, FL — in America — bumper stickers publically cry for blood: "Kill a Queer for Christ."

A Miami newspaper launched a series of lengthy articles, examining the causes of homosexuality and its sociological ramifications. The fracas continues in Dade County, sending not only ripples but waves splashing across the country — and indeed they were splashes heard around the world.

The Rev. Paul Peachy, pastor of MCC Hawaii and publisher of "The Paper," the voice of gay Hawaii, broadcast the following open letter to Anita Bryant over Hawaiian radio in early May. "Dear Anita, You have often been quoted as stating that you represent the 'religious' position in opposing gay civil rights. But let us look at the facts: a spokesperson for the National Council of Churches (Rev. Sheek) has said that it is 'simply not true,' as well as statements from the Episcopal Church, UCC, Lutheran Church, Unitarian Church, and the Society of Friends.

"Also, Anita, you have often used the word 'sick' in describing gay people. Let us look at the facts: Dr. Gibson, president of the American Psychiatric Association and the association itself, have not only removed homosexuality from its list of mental disorders, but has

issued a strong statement in support of gay civil rights.

"Also, Anita, You allege that there are dangers in having gay people as teachers. Let us look at the facts: The National Education Association, The American and United Association of Teachers, and the American Association of University Professors all state differently.

"Anita, as a woman, you state that gay people are a threat to this country. Let us look at the facts: NOW, Women's Alliance, and the International Women's Year Commission do not concur with you.

"Anita, may I leave you with this thought: A day without civil rights is a day without sunshine."

The story of the sequence of events in Dade County has been told over and over. The details need not be repeated here. There will be a referendum vote in Miami on June 7. Gay people and their friends are rallying all possible support to defeat the 64,304 who signed the petition calling for a referendum. The 100,000 to 200,000 gay people who live in that county cannot do it alone. They are a minority, but contributions of all kinds are coming in from all across the United States.

In the meantime, gay people from New York to California are buying California fruit products in protest to Ms. Bryant's Florida orange commercials. "Sunkist, and Cal-Fame are California Brands," remarked Frank Zerilli, California gay activist. ●

CONTINUED from page 2

presidential aide that representatives of the gay community would have an opportunity to meet with officials of the Departments of Justice, Defense, and HUD; and the Civil Service and the Civil Rights Commissions.

Margaret "Midge" Costanza, the U.S. President's White House Assistant for Public Liaison, met with Rev. Perry and the other leaders for three hours in the

Roosevelt Room adjacent to the Oval Office of the President. Afterward she said, "It is unfortunate that such a large segment of the citizens of this country have felt left out of the participation in government that touches their lives." President Carter was in Camp David at the time.

Presidential Press Secretary, Jody Powell, remarked about the meeting as

follows, "I think that when an organized group of people feel they have a grievance, that they are not being treated fairly in this country, that part of this whole business about what sort of country we live in is their right to put that grievance before the officials of the land and say, 'We want redress.' That is the essence of what America is all about. How I feel about gay rights or any other rights doesn't have anything to do with it. It is a question of their right to say, 'Look, we are not getting a fair shake and this is what ought to be done.'"

Ms. Costanza told CBS Television, "I just wish that the citizens of this nation could have joined me in that room to listen to the examples of oppression I heard today. Perhaps the issue of homosexuality would be better understood and perhaps more widely accepted in this country if they could have heard what I heard."

Among the special in-depth presentation made and discussed in the momentous meeting were: discrimination touching the lives of gay men and women in the following areas of the federal government structure:

1. Civil rights legislation
2. Military policy
3. Immigration and naturalization
4. Internal revenue
5. Federal prisoners
6. Civil Rights Commission jurisdiction
7. Housing and Urban development



The board and staff of the National Gay Task Force with Presidential aide, Midge Costanza after historic White House meeting. It was the NGTF which arranged the meeting with the Carter administration. (L-R) Pokey Anderson, Charles Brydon, Betty Powell, Midge Costanza, Jean O'Leary, Dr. Franklin Kameny, Charlotte Bunch, Dr. Bruce Voeller.

Photo by Bill Bland

Rev. Perry and other representatives of national lesbian and gay male community with President Carter's Assistant for Public Liaison, Midge Costanza. (L-R) Rev. Troy D. Perry, Ms. Costanza, Ray Hartman, Myra Riddell, Charlotte Spitzer, George Raya.

Official White House photo.



8. Civil Service

Rev. Perry made an impassioned appeal for gay people to "just have the rights guaranteed to all Americans, no more, no less."

Ms. Costanza invited the gay leaders to return to the White House in September for a second meeting, promising that President Carter will be invited to attend.

In addition to Rev. Perry, the other participants from the gay community were Dr. Bruce Voeller and Jean O'Leary, Co-Executive Directors of the National Gay Task Force, which arranged the meeting; Pokey Anderson, a lesbian-activist from Houston; Charles Brydon, president of the Dorian Society in Seattle; Charlotte Bunch, Editor of the feminist quarterly, *Quest*; Ray Hartman, Los Angeles Attorney; Frank Kameny, long-time Washington, D.C. activist; William Kelley of Chicago; Elaine Noble, state legislator from Massachusetts; Betty Powell, an instructor at Brooklyn College; Myra Riddell, Los Angeles psychiatric therapist; George Raya, former lobbyist from San Francisco; Charlotte Spitzer, a Founder of Parents and Friends of Gays in Los Angeles.

Other Carter administration officials attending the March 26 session were: Marilyn Haft, Ms. Costanza's deputy; and Robert Mulsom, a civil rights specialist.

The National Gay Task Force has received a \$7500 grant from the Playboy Foundation, provided it can raise an



National gay leaders discuss grievances with presidential aide Midge Costanza in the White House Roosevelt Room. (Left from Ms. Costanza): Marilyn Haft (Ms. Costanza's deputy), Dr. Bruce Voeller, Charlotte Bunch, Elaine Noble, Rev. Troy Perry, Dr. Franklin Kamery, George Raya, Pokey Anderson (obscured), Mary Mendola, Charlotte Spitzer, Charles Brydon, Betty Powell, Cookie Lutkefedder, Bill Kelley, Jean O'Leary, Robert Mulsom.

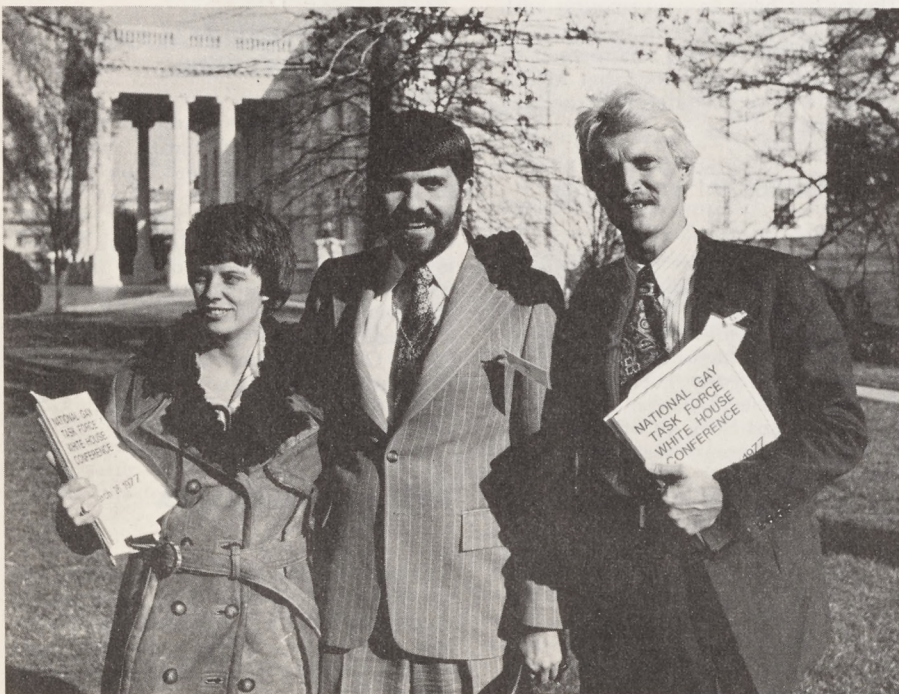
Photo by Bill Bland

equal amount for matching funds. The funds will be used for the purpose of research and preparation of materials in connection with the series of meetings with Federal Agencies in the next few months.

As Rev. Perry, Dr. Voeller, and Ms. O'Leary left the White House after a news conference and photography session, walking arm and arm in tears, they prayed that a new era was beginning in America.

That same day national television news carried side by side stories of the White House meeting and a fire bombing in Dade County, Florida. Referring to singer Anita Bryant and to the lies and hysteria coming out of the "Save Our Children" campaign in Florida, NTGF Co-Director Bruce Voeller told a news conference just following the White House conference session, "The positive and friendly discussions we've just had are cause for rejoicing that such calls to blatant bigotry will no longer reach sympathetic ears at the seat of our democratic government."

20,000,000 Americans, perhaps millions more around the world, await the long term results.



The Rev. Troy Perry poses on White House lawn with Jean O'Leary and Dr. Bruce Voeller, Co-Executive Directors of the National Gay Task Force, following their meeting on Saturday, March 19 with President Carter's aides.

Official White House Photo

Fellowship In Unity

News of the Worldwide Fellowship Family



HEADQUARTERS STAFF

Now that Herb Shannon has been in the Fellowship Accountant's office full time for seven months, the big question is: How did the Fellowship survive for seven years without him? Accurate financial records, reporting, projections and planning, as well as invoicing and proper crediting of accounts are products of Herb's long days. Always the first to arrive at the Fellowship offices in the morning, often the last to leave in the evening, and frequently at his desk on Saturday, Herb has brought a lot of new dimensions to the work of handling the Fellowship's financial matters. In daily conference with Fellowship treasurer, Elder Sandmire, Herb keeps a watchful eye on both income and expenses. Herb comes to the Fellowship after many years on the Board of Directors of MCC Chicago and several years service as Great Lakes District treasurer.

Also new in the Fellowship offices is Francis Joachim.

A former J.P. Morgan Company employee in New York City in charge of expence budgeting for that \$135 million annual operation, Francis is also former treasurer of MCC Brooklyn and of the northest district. A Member of the UFMCC Finance Committee, Francis accepted the position of Lay Administrator during the 1976 General Conference, moved to Los Angeles in November, and started work in the Fellowship Offices on January 1, 1977.

A native of Vermont, he holds a B.A. degree in Finance. Francis administers the Fellowship Group Insurance Plan, is administrator of the general offices, chairperson of the Committee on Lay Concerns, and Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Universal Fellowship Press.

CAMPUS MINISTRY

Bob Berry, a dynamic young man from Washington, D.C., has been appointed by the Board of Elders as Director of the Board of Campus Ministry. In a recent letter to all churches and ministers, Bob outlined his imaginative new approach to the ministry to gay students on the college campuses. He has already established contacts with the 2500 campuses in the United States offering the resources of the Board of Campus

Ministry to help gay students who are interested. Bob has his headquarters in the UFMCC Washington, D.C. Office with Adam DeBaugh and Rev. Roy Birchard.

MASSACHUSETTS COUNCIL REJECTS MCC BOSTON

Even as the Fellowship was preparing a formal application to the National Council of Churches, the Massachusetts Council of Churches turned down a request from the Northeast District for membership in behalf of the Boston and Worchester congregations. No official reasons were given. It is known that the Baptist delegate was under instruction to vote negatively. One said that MCC is too young. Others had problems with the "Biblical injunctions" against homosexuality.

NCC MEMBERSHIP

The 1971 General Conference directed that the elders pursue membership in the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA when the Universal Fellowship reaches the minimum number of churches and constituency membership. Rev. Perry has been in conversation with MCC officials and has been informed by Bishop Frederick Jordan, chairperson of the membership committee, that MCC's application will be considered at the May 1977 meeting.

JSAC MEMBERSHIP

The Board of Elders have approved application for membership in "The Joint Strategy and Action Committee," a coalition of home mission staff workers in major Christian denominations. MCC personnel have already been participating in several of the JSAC task forces, but MCC itself has not been an official member of the parent committee. MCC prison ministry personnel (Revs. Gilbert, Mickley and Arthur) have participated in the Criminal Justice Task Force for a couple of years, and Rev. Roy Birchard has worked with the Alternative Life-styles Task Force. The Revs. James Sandmire, Howard Gaass, and Roy Birchard have conferred with JSAC leaders and MCC's application will be considered at the JSAC spring meeting.



The Reverend Jan Weymouth, new District Coordinator for Australia / New Zealand, with Reverend Arthur Cazeault at District Conference in Sydney.

photo by John A. Donohoe

AUSTRALIA / NEW ZEALAND DISTRICT CONFERENCE

The Rev. Jan Weymouth has been elected District Coordinator, succeeding the Rev. Lee Carlton, who is now serving in England. The district conference was held in Melbourne and hosted by MCC Melbourne, where the Rev. Art Cazault is pastor. Rev. Weymouth, the first woman licensed as an MCC minister in the Australasia district, is pastor of MCC Brisbane and lives there with her spouse, Carol O'Keefe. Rev. Margaret Breckenridge was elected Assistant District Coordinator and Mr. Gerry Smith, Secretary-Treasurer.

ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA

The Rev. Margaret Breckenridge and the Rev. Ellen Watson have been elected co-pastors of MCC Adelaide, succeeding the Rev. Stan Harris, who has been elected pastor of MCC Baltimore in the United States.

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

The Rev. Ron Burcham, former pastor of MCC Kansas City, Missouri, United States, has been elected pastor of MCC Sydney, succeeding the Rev. Lee Carlton. His spouse Bobby Brown has joined him in Sydney. They meet in the Village church in Paddington and have a church office in the city of Sydney.

NORTH SHORE, AUSTRALIA

North Shore MCC Study group with an average attendance so far of less than 20 persons per Sunday has maintained an average offering per person of nearly \$5. They publish an attractive journal of articles entitled *Awareness*, which contains many items of value for their outreach into the community and for the education of their own members.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

We learn from a press release that Metropolitan Community Church of Melbourne has finally realized a long dreamed of centre. After over six months of negotiations with the Melbourne City Council and Board of Works to secure a permit for the use of the existing building at 62 West Toorak Road, South Yarra, the official dedication was held. It was a great time for all who attended.

An open house was held in the afternoon and nearly one hundred people attended the evening worship service. The centre houses the chapel which seats 100 people, the church offices, a social hall, a kitchen, and residences. All of these facilities are appointed in the true old Victorian style. Being that it is an old Victorian mansion, every room, hallway, and stairwell is garnished with crystal chandeliers. Not to mention the beautiful mahogany fireplaces and gold leafed mirror in the entry way, we move on to mention that it is a rather gay place. Our pastor, Rev. Art Cazeault, has strategically placed his desk beneath the chandelier in his office, causing the District Coordinator to ask upon entering the room, "Is this the office of Cardinal Cazeault?" The building has become a real home for our congregation.

Since we moved in, most of the rooms have been redecorated and our activities have tremendously grown. We now use the centre five or six nights per week with worship, Christian Education, a Married Gays Group, Gay A.A., socials, mid-week dinners, etc.

Rev. Cazeault says, "The centre is an answer to much prayer and very hard work on the part of many people. Much credit belongs to our very dedicated congregation for all their patience and efforts to make this dream a reality."

AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

The Rev. Peter Alander-Smith is now serving as full time pastor of the Auckland Study Group, succeeding the Rev. Don Mence, who served the congregation, along with his Presbyterian responsibilities for many months. Attendance is now averaging more than 40 people at the Sunday evening worship service and social hour at St. Matthews Church. Having completed their ambitious drive for a full time pastor, their next aim is for mission status and chartering as a church. Their lengthy and newsy newsletter shows an active and growing congregation working with their new pastor.

LONDON, ENGLAND

MCC London is working to send a delegate to General Conference. They have asked their members for contributions and pledges to this fund. On Tuesday's Pastor Kenneth Taylor holds Bible study and prayer meeting in his flat and on Thursday evening there is a fellowship meeting in the pastor's flat. Worship services are held on Sunday at the Pimlico Neighborhood Aid Centre on Longmore Street in Victoria. Attendance is averaging 35-40 at the Sunday services. Nick Rowden was recently appointed MCC London's first deacon. He is in charge of the MCC London bookstall and directs the mid-week services on the South Bank.

The Rev. Lee Carlton and his spouse, Christian Carlton (Randy Miller), have arrived in the United Kingdom where Lee will have his headquarters as Coordinator of Church Extension in the United Kingdom and Europe.

ZARIA, NIGERIA

The editor has received an article from Zaria, entitled, "The Wonderful Work of God."

The article begins by quoting the Scripture, "Do not fail to welcome a stranger, for many had received an angel in doing so unknowingly."

It goes on to tell about a traveling evangelist who stopped at MCC Zaria and brought a blessing with him for everybody. He was carrying a big book, which turned out to be a Bible like they had never seen before, it was so big.

Pastor Maduka invited him to preach that day. He quoted again and again from the Scriptures. The people were amazed at his knowledge of the Word of God. He is a completely blind man, physically, but not spiritually. Everybody was moved by the Holy Spirit as the congregation witnessed the wonderful work of God.

TORONTO, CANADA

Toronto Responds to a Challenge

by Rev. David A. Gunton

Last fall, Reverend Bob Wolfe came before the Toronto congregation with some very bad news. The offering had slid down, and the level of expenditure had risen. MCC Toronto had realized the need for a place to minister to the needs of the gay community. In faith, they had opened the Gay Community Services Centre in their downtown offices. Their concern was meeting a need and many people were being helped by the volunteer staff. But this step of faith was costing a great deal of money and for a while it appeared that the Centre might be forced to close down. When the final figures were in, the Centre and the decreasing givings had resulted in a deficit of \$2,400, which had been taken from reserve accounts held for other needs.

Reverend Wolfe, had had been ministering in Toronto for almost 4 years, was told when he first arrived in the city, that



Reverend Elder Perry addresses guests at a dinner / dance sponsored by the Toronto church in his honor.

photo by John Bodis

there was simply no way that a bunch of gay people could get together and form a church, and if they did, it would only last for a few years. Bob had confidence. He knew that God was not going to let the church fail and that there was enough faith in the congregation to do something about it. After much prayer, Bob knew what he had to do. He stood before the congregation and challenged them to bring in \$1,000 per week for the next four weeks. He knew it would not be easy. The congregation was not that affluent, but Bob knew the Holy Spirit would direct them in their givings. The faith of the congregation was now to be made manifest in their actions.

Throughout the week preceeding, the

first of the special offerings, an average of 11 people had met together in the offices at 5:30 pm to worship, asking God to move in their hearts and the hearts of the congregation. The call for the offering went out. And as the organ played and the choir sang, the Lord moved in that congregation and they responded, not with the \$1,000 as they had been requested to do, but with \$1,300. The following week, the 5:30 worship services continued every night with an average attendance of 9. The offering presented was \$1,700. The third week, an average of 10 people met together nightly and the congregation responded with \$2,000. In just three weeks, they not only met their goal of \$4,00, but exceeded it by \$1,000.

Yet there was still one week to go. How would they respond? Would the givings go back down to the old mark? Pastor Bob knew that the Lord would not let that happen, and when the offering for the fourth week was received, the congregation responded in love with another \$1,600 to put their final total

at \$6,600.

MCC Toronto had taken a good hard look at itself and realized that if it was to be the Church of God, it had to respond to Christ in a true spirit of love. Of the \$6,600 only \$300 had come from outside the regular congregation. But beyond the givings, the congregation moved with the Holy Spirit and took upon itself a renewed effort at the Services Centre. New staff was recruited, techniques were streamlined, and the Gay Community Services Centre opened a new chapter in its ministry to the community.

The givings of the Toronto church will never go back to their previous level. During the four week period, Reverend Wolfe outlined the Bible's way for church financing—tithing. Already, many people are receiving that blessing, which the prophet Malachi spoke of. The fear of not being able to afford to tithe is passing away and God's rich blessings are pouring forth.



ABOVE: Reverend Elder Perry addresses Board of Directors of MCC Toronto at a special luncheon held in his honor. BELOW: Well-attended dinner / dance held in honor of Reverend Perry included many members of the business community. photos by John Bodis



FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS

Vol. 1, Number 1 of the "Ozark Son-Rise" tells us that the little Study Group in Fayetteville has been blessed with a building to meet in on a regular basis for worship and for social activities. The Rev. Bob Miller has taken up residence in Fayetteville to be their pastor. On his arrival, along with an organ presented to them by their brothers and sisters in Grand Prairie, TX, he told the congregation. "I am a newcomer to these beautiful hills of Arkansas and I have been blessed with seeing the mighty hand of God at work in the short weeks that I have been here. For that, I can't take credit, but can only stand back and praise and acknowledge that God does walk these hills and leave the imprint of the Almighty here. Coming from the large



cities of Houston and Dallas, where night life is abundant and meeting places are many, I learned that I had to come here to find what true Christian sharing is all about. The Spirit of the Lord has been at work a long time, bringing the harvest to its fullness. And what a wonder to see." And he went on to praise the work of his predecessor, Jan Reeder, former worship coordinator for her "determination to follow the leading of the Spirit that we might all be worshipping and sharing together today." (April 1977)

In obedience to the Biblical command (?), when the Rev. Bob Miller was called to pastor the MCC congregation at Fayetteville, Arkansas, he took up the organ and headed for the Ozarks. It turns out that it's a peripatetic organ. Originally it was bought by Bill Baer for his own use. When he left Houston for Los Angeles to attend Samaritan Theological Institute, he donated it to MCC Houston with the stipulation that when they got a bigger one, this one would be passed on to another church group who needed it. They eventually passed it on to MCC of the Living Spirit in Grand Prairie,

TX. When they got a new piano, they made it available to Rev. Miller for his ministry in Fayetteville. In due time there will be another plate on the plaque on the baque as Fayetteville graduates to a bigger instrument and they learn of another church in need.

They call it a "chaplain" pump organ because it's the kind military chaplains load into their jeep to visit front line troops. Fayetteville's on the front line now . . . Next stop?

OCEANSIDE, CALIFORNIA

MCC Oceanside celebrated its second anniversary in March with 67 in attendance. Rev. Elder James Sandmire was guest speaker and declared that the Oceanside church is "one of the most beautiful in the Fellowship." Special awards were given to church members



who had been particularly involved in the work of the church. After the service, a delicious luncheon was served, prepared by member Ray Redden.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

The Rev. Donald Pederson, pastor of MCC Los Angeles, was overwhelmed with joy as he looked out at nearly 1000 worshippers on Easter Sunday. "Our Lord Jesus left the tomb to continue to reach out and minister to all people. Let us look in faith to our Risen King for guidance, strength, and help in our every situation and need. Let us let every worship be filled with faith in God and praise to Christ, as we *truly* believe in the one who has the power to break the chain of death forever."

World renowned recording artist, Billy Preston appeared in concert at a Sunday evening worship service in February, The Cal Tech Men's Glee Club appeared in May, and the Tennesseans will make a return visit to lead the congregation in worship and song in June.

The Gospel Choir, known as the Gospel Ministry of Music, continues to serve the Lord in the prolonged absence of founder and director, Jimmi Irving who has been sidelined for a few months with a severe back injury. Jim Hawkins is directing the choir as they prepare a trip to General Conference in Denver in July.

Staff ministers are the Rev. Willie Smith and the Rev. June Norris. Exhorters Fernando Martinez and Bern David minister to the Spanish-speaking community. Board Member Larry Rodriguez has been praised for the exemplary Christian Education program which he directs. The Friday night Alternate Coffee House has met with on-going acceptance for more than six months. The Chancel Choir has grown in members and quality. Founded by Rev. Laurence Bernier, it is now under the direction of composer and pianist, Carl Mathes. The



Growing American Youth Group under the presidency of Steve Rigalado, meets on Friday evenings and continues its ministry among the young adults, with a variety of programs including discussions, movies, retreats, trips to Disneyland, etc. Artist Shelagh Paul and her spouse Linda Hill are co-editors of "Good News."

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

"Joyful Noise Unto the Lord," the new record album by the MCC San Diego Choir is going over big. Mail orders are coming in, and it is being well received everywhere.

Early this year, the church excitedly welcomed back for a Sunday evening pulpit appearance, the Rev. John Hose,

pastor from 1971 to 1974, presently pastor of MCC Tampa and Vice Moderator of the Board of Elders. It was "Papa John's" first visit to MCC San Diego's new church home.

San Diego City Council has established and funded a Gay Rights Task Force. The vote on April 4 was the climax of a strong, two-week campaign for the support of the proposal by the Rev. David Farrel, pastor of MCC San Diego and Southwest District Coordinator.

It started when some of the neighbors of the MCC congregation circulated an Anita Bryant type petition to save the neighborhood "for our children," calling for the expulsion of the church from the neighborhood. Besides the injustices involved, the San Diego church people were not about to let that happen to the church home they had worked so hard to build into one of the finest in the Fellowship. Rev. David was granted a hearing to make an impassioned plea before the policy board after the DIRECTOR recommended that the proposal be defeated. "I speak to a proposal born of grief,



tragedy and NEAR tragedy in our community. I speak on behalf of an oppressed minority, so oppressed that it dare not speak for itself for fear of social and economic suicide." Despite the dangers, Rev. David's plea was backed by a petition bearing 1600 signatures. Understanding also came from Mr. George Williams, Executive Directive of the San Diego County Human Relations Commission, after he attended a worship service at MCC San Diego.

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

The Rev. Stanely Roberts, formerly pastor of MCC Akron, OH was installed as pastor of MCC San Jose on March 27, with the Rev. Wally Lanchester, District Coordinator, officiating, along with the Rev. Elder James Sandmire.

VENTURA, CALIFORNIA

Rev. Virgil Scott, pastor, reports that the Board of Directors of MCC Ventura did an admirable job of coordinating the work of the church during his recent extended convalescence from surgery. The church continues to be actively involved in community service projects as well as building up its own community of worship, witness and works of love. A March auction, an April show, and weekly dinner-socials are among the items mentioned in the newsy "Ventura Community Newsletter."

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA

Rev. Tere Roderick and the San Luis Obispo congregation were recently featured in a photo story in the Religion Section of the San Luis Obispo County Telegram-Tribune (April 23, 1977) under a banner headline that read, "OPEN WELCOME, WELCOME, Congregation sits apart from tradition." It was an unbiased description of the church there and the Fellowship as a whole. It was their first "flamboyant" publicity since their founding in June 1976. Rev. Roderick, former staff minister at MCC San Francisco, is well aware that publicity sometimes brings the worst out of the church's enemies, but the article says, "Generally Ms. Roderick and her church have been without the fear which has engulfed other cities where the MCC church has been the victim of fires set by arsonists — as in San Francisco and Portland, OR." Rev. Roderick is also MCC Chaplain of two Correctional Institutions nearby, Atascadero State Hospital and the California Men's Colony, where she serves more than 100 prisoners in each institution. At CMC there were more than 200 prisoners attending the beautiful and moving first anniversary service.



Sisters in Christ sing, pray, worship and fellowship together at Fifth Annual Northwest District Women's Conference. photos courtesy of Rev. Jane Taylor



FIFTH ANNUAL NORTHWEST DISTRICT WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Ninety four women attended the Fifth Annual Northwest District's Women's Conference at Camp Cazadora, a United Church of Christ camp ground, among the red woods. The theme of the Conference was "A Spiritual Retreat," and a spiritual time was had by all. The churches that were represented were: Long Beach, San Jose, Sacramento, Stockton, Oakland, San Francisco, California; Seattle, Washington; and Portland, Oregon. The Coordinators of the Conference were: Rev. Jane Taylor, Assistant Pastor of the San Francisco Metropolitan Community Church and Board Members: Madeline C. Reed and D.L. Webb of Sacramento Metropolitan Community Church. Music was provided by Guitars Unlimited, a talented group of women guitarists, who are much sought after for their performances by MCC's throughout the west.

NORTHWEST DISTRICT

The Rev. Wally Lanchester, pastor of MCC Seattle, has been elected District Coordinator of the Northwest District, and the Rev. Tom Taylor, assistant Pastor of MCC Sacramento, Assistant District Coordinator. The Portland, OR church has been chartered and the Willamette Valley Study Group was named a Mission by the Board of Elders. The District is currently studying a proposal to divide the district into two districts.

DENVER, COLORADO

As Pastor Charlie Archart and his staff continue to be immersed in preparations for the 1977 International General Conference to be held the first week of August in that city, life as the church goes on. Rev. Rhea Miller is serving as Assistant Pastor and Rev. Frank Murr and Rev. Karen Lindstrom are staff ministers. Committees are working everywhere to make this, the eighth general conference, the greatest yet. Rev. Perry preached a Spiritual Renewal in Holy Week. A delegation is planning to attend District Conference in St. Louis May 27, 29. Parents of Gays has developed into an active, informative, and helpful group in the church.



Rev. Robert Wolfe and Rev. Larry Gauer are now working in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, to organize a Fellowship congregation in that city. Rev. Wolfe and Rev. Gauer were joined in Holy Union on Friday, September 24, 1977 by the Rev. Elder Troy Perry. Shown with Revs. Wolfe and Gauer in the group photograph are [L to R]: Mr. Jean-Paul Napier; Rev. Philip Speranza, [MCC Ottawa]; Rev. Elder Perry; Rev. David Gunton, [MCC Toronto]; Mr. Wayne Hagen.

photo by John Bodis

VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA

The Rev. Bob Wolfe and the Rev. Larry Gauer have taken up residence in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada and are serving as co-pastors of a growing congregation in that western Canada city.

Rev. Wolfe, founding pastor of MCC Toronto, former pastor of MCC Sacramento and former Northwest District Coordinator, continues to serve as Coordinator of Church Extension in Canada, a post he has held since 1973. He is currently also chairperson of the Universal Fellowship's Ministerial Credentials and Affairs Committee.

Before leaving Toronto, Rev. Wolfe presided at a service of Licensure for three members of the Toronto congregation who had completed the requirements for professional ministry and were approved by the Board of Elders. They

are the Rev. Gauer, the Rev. Lloyd Greenway, and the Rev. JoAnne Monti, the first woman licensed as a professional MCC minister in Canada.

Also serving in Canada is the Rev. Philip Speranza, pastor of the newly chartered church, MCC Ottawa; and the Rev. David Gunton of MCC Toronto. Rev. Wolfe was succeeded as Pastor of MCC Toronto by the Rev. John Ayres, coming from Jacksonville, FL.

In the first two months nearly a hundred people attended MCC get-acquainted meetings or contacted the pastors in Vancouver. This new church group in western Canada will serve a well-organized gay community, one that could attract 1700 to its recent Imperial Ball and get several hundred of its members to attend a public meeting with the police department to protest police harassment



of gay people.

The new congregation has published an attractive newsletter, "Metro Community News West." March 23, April 7, April 20, May 5 and May 19.

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

Rev. Debra Gendron and Trinity MCC became the subject of publicity several times in April in the *Los Angeles Times* and in the *Riverside* and *San Bernardino* newspapers.

On April 5, Debbie gave the invocation for a meeting of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors. The next day the *Press-Enterprise* carried a lengthy article with Photos telling about Debbie, the church, the Fellowship. The 25 year old pastor of the 63 member congregation had been chosen at random from the *Yellow Pages* to give the invocation. Afterwards one of the Supervisors was



quoted as saying, "As long as she sticks with the Gospel, it's fine with me." The Rev. Debra Gendron did stick with the Gospel and her invocation (making no reference to sexuality) was "pretty good," according to the same Supervisor.

Additional publicity came in connection with the church's application in April to remodel a two story brick building for a house of worship. Since the fire that destroyed their church during General Conference last year, they have been meeting in a local bar which they transform weekly to make it suitable for church. The remodeling was approved by the San Bernardino City Council in late April, and is expected to cost \$7000 to \$10,000. (Deacon Fred Conwell from Los Angeles and Long Beach is donating all the electrical work.) The publicity followed the attempt of one councilman to block the approval. He voted "No" and made the publicity-provoking statement, "I don't think there should be a gay church. It's against my faith. It's against God's will as far as I'm concerned, and I don't think we should have a church there. It's a church as far as I'm concerned that shouldn't be a church." The maneuver failed and Trinity MCC is expecting to be in their new church home in San Bernardino in June.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

As MCC Washington continues its effort to elect a new pastor, it was announced that Dr. Cynthia Wedel, one of the twelve presidents of the World Council of Churches, will preach for the congregation on Sunday June 19. Mrs. Wedel, who resides in Alexandria, VA, is also National Chair for Volunteers of the American Red Cross in Washington. She holds a Ph.D. in psychology from George Washington University, and five honorary doctorates.

As we go to press, it was learned that MCC Washington, D. C. had elected the Rev. Larry Uhrig as pastor with a 79% vote. Rev. Uhrig has been a staff minister at MCC Washington for the last several years and was ordained there following General Conference in that city last year.

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

The Women's Coffeehouse made its debut in May with an impressive schedule of weekly programs. "Work Teams" is a new concept in getting the work of the church done by the church, the people. "What are the Work Teams? They are the following commissions: Finance (fundraising and financial planning); hospitality (cleaning, ushering refreshments, etc.); Public Information (publicity); Coffeehouse, and Liturgy and Music. The Council on Ministries coordinates innovations such as Work Team Night as well as the Feedback Forum. Everyone is welcome to get into the Work Team or Teams of their choice." (From "MCC News," Hartford, April 1977).

Pastor F. Jay Deacon is chairperson of

Project H of the Regional Conference of Churches in Connecticut. Project H is sponsoring a program April 22, featuring a lecture and question-answer period with Father John McNeill, author of the current classic in the field of the homosexual and religion, *The Church and the Homosexual*. (The book is available from the Universal Fellowship Press, Box 5570, Los Angeles, CA 90055. \$10.)

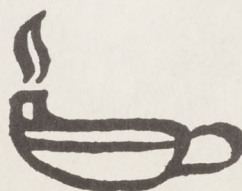
The monthly Feedback Forum, in the tradition of Fireside Chats and presidential call ins, invites all members of the congregation to a Sunday afternoon at the parsonage. The April Forum focused on MCC's building situation and the search for a new permanent home.

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

The MCC Jacksonville newsletter gives us an interesting peek into the daily life of a pastor. The writer, being unemployed, was serving as a volunteer in the church office. He writes that one day he became somewhat upset when he had to wait forty-five minutes in the rain for Pastor David Carden to arrive. But his feelings changed when he learned that the pastor was detained by an emergency visit to the city jail. Then he describes another day. "I was doing some typing in the outer office while Rev. Carden was answering correspondence. In the four hour period that I was there, the phone rang 15 or 20 times. Although I attempted to screen the calls so Rev. Carden could concentrate, all but one of them had to be handled by him personally. By the time my lover picked me up, our poor minister still had half his work to do, plus a counseling appointment, a deacon's class, and several other matters. Other days, it's hospital calls, meetings with civic leaders or something else that makes his work day go on for ten or eleven hours."

MIAMI, FLORIDA

The Rev. Joseph Gilbert, former pastor of MCC Providence, Worcester, Phoenix, and Sacramento, has been elected pastor of MCC Miami, succeeding the Rev. Keith Davis. The installation was scheduled for May 1st with Rev. A. Evan St. Ives, District Coordinator, Rev. John Gill, Assistant District Coordinator, and Rev. Keith Davis, former pastor, participating. In his farewell remarks, Rev. Davis said, "The best is yet to come. I see the church growing in every area. I see new programs being instituted and I see your new pastor providing his particular talents to lead you into the paths of rightness and New Life that is promised."





OAHU, HAWAII

Pastor Paul Peachy has been going to the island of Maui to minister to the people there, a new office has been opened in Honolulu, and plans are being made to bring the whole choir from the State of Hawaii to the State of Colorado for General Conference. The Sunday services continue, the mid week activities, prayer meetings, bible study, choir practice, social affairs, as well as social action and social concerns. The new office was inaugurated with a Grand Opening, pot luck dinner, congregational meeting, and entertainment.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

A recent edition of "The Shepherd's Staff," has as its theme "There is a Place for Black Gays in MCC." The lead article, under the theme title, is by black Deacon Tony Terrell, described by the editor as "one of our most loved and respected members." Pastor Ken Martin, in his column writes, "I realized at the first MCC service I attended that this is what the Body of Christ should be: inclusive and comprised of all peoples. There are many valuable and inspiring contributions and many concerns that come to us uniquely from our black sisters and brothers. This issue will touch on some of these and on how we can incorporate them into our life as a community of faith — not because we are white or black, but because we are one."

Black singer Larry Manning described the MCC Gospel Choir and its ministry of music. "Gospel music," Larry writes, "of course, is an outgrowth of black history and culture."

QUINCY, ILLINOIS

The congregation with its meeting address in Illinois and its mailing address in Iowa and some of its members living in Missouri is led by Reid Christensen, a man who gave up a promising secular career of 29 years with all its financial security and community acceptance. "Suddenly I felt free. Secure. God willed it all to happen just the way it did to test my sincerity and resolve . . . to demand my all while offering 'success' by worldly standards." The attractive monthly newsletter "The Lamplighter," presents a regular column of testimonies indicating how God has been working in the lives of members of the congregation. "Then we went to MCC Illiano and then is when the change in our lives began, as we found Jesus and became very active in our Study Group . . ."

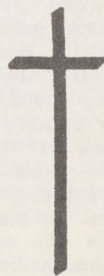
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

Margaret Hougen, formerly a minister of the United Church of Christ in Whately, MA, and whose husband, Edward Hougen, is pastor of MCC Boston, has been named Worship Coordinator of

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

Fifth anniversary celebration of the founding of MCC Sacramento, California [Clockwise, from upper left]: Pastor Freda Smith and Rev. Perry at anniversary banquet; anniversary worship service; Sister Madeline Reed sings a special solo; members and friends at banquet; behind the scenes look at the hard-working kitchen crew, Marty Casmero, Wayne Bennett, and Dee Browning; Rev. Perry preaching at anniversary service.

Photos by Rev. Tom Taylor



MCC Worcester. She succeeds the Rev. Joseph Gilbert, recently installed as pastor of MCC Miami, FL. Gloria Audet, who has been quite involved in peer counseling and other ministerial work at the Worcester mission is an exhorter from MCC Hartford. She is continuing to work with Mrs. Hougén.

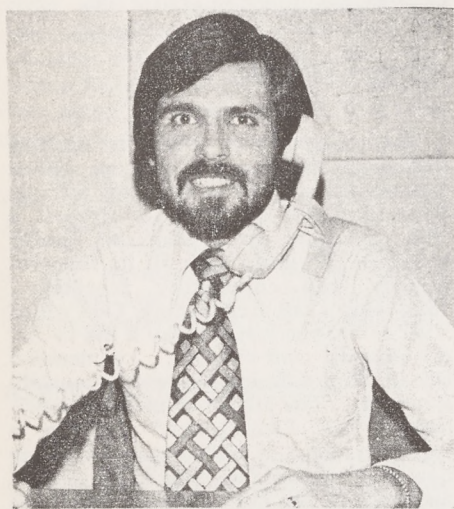
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

Pastor Jim Glycer reports that all the people injured in the armed holdup of MCC Kansas City during choir practice a few months ago are recovered now. The gunmen have not been apprehended, even though they have staged another holdup in the same neighborhood.

Christian education series recently have included "Homosexuality and the Bible," based on materials by Rev. Bob Arthur; an "Overview of the Gospels," and "MCC Kansas City — What are we all about?" The latter is an effort to work out an understanding of the nature of the church and its ministry.

Earlier this year Pastor Glycer was the subject of a story in the *Kansas City Star*, 38 column inches describing his ministry of pastoring and counseling under the headline, "Minister to City's Homosexuals." The article concludes with, "He tries to cultivate gay and straight friends outside his parish. Casual conversations often turn into counseling sessions, he said. But he really doesn't mind too much. He knows he has found his calling and that his new life is right for him."

WICHITA, KANSAS



Rev. Arthur Ramirez, Pastor, MCC Wichita

Enthusiasm is running high in the MCC Wichita congregation and in the community as a whole. At a recent congregational meeting, \$500 was voted for the campaign for civil liberties in Dade County, FL. Another \$500 was raised recently for the NAtional Evangelistic Team, headed by the Rev. Ron Anderson, as they conducted a Spirit-filled Spiritual Renewal in Wichita. At the initiative of MCC Wichita, a community organization

has been formed of all the clubs, gay organizations and businesses in Wichita, with an elected executive committee.

The MCC Defense Fund has been established to help all members of the community who have legal problems arising out of child custody cases, entrapment, etc. Monthly fund raising events will augment the fund which was kicked off with a \$1000 bank account.

As MCC Wichita prepares to celebrate its second anniversary as a church in July, with an average attendance of 50, there is a growing recognition that the church is a leader in the gay community of Wichita.

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

Those who have visited MCC St. Louis, even briefly, observe that it is a beehive of activity. Elsewhere in the issue of IN UNITY there's a description of a typical day in the life of the person who is in the center of all that activity, Pastor Carol Cureton. Attendance remains high at the weekly rap sessions. April and May topics included, "Christian Commitment," "Religion Looks at Homosexuality," "Feelings about being Christian," "A Police Officer Views Gay People," "What is your Opinion of God?" and the movie "Men's Lives." A lot of attention is being directed toward the upcoming District Conference in St. Louis with Adam DeBaugh as guest speaker.



Newly-elected Boardmembers at MCC St. Louis, Missouri. ABOVE, George Bright; BELOW, Dr. Alice Kitchener, and James Art.



George Bright, Editorial Advisor to IN UNITY, sends a report on a recent congregational meeting. "From the opening report by the pastor to the final 'Amen,' our weeks and months of hard work unfolded before us. We listened to our treasurer's report and were thankful for an almost-balanced budget. We reviewed the work of the Board of Directors and marveled at their stamina. We took pride in the activities of the various committees — social, Christian education, telephone volunteers, covenant families, counseling, hospital visitation, institutional ministry, publications, and many, many more. What we had taken for granted on a day-to-day basis seemed monumental when

taken 'en masse'.

"The realization that were not just looking backward brought even greater satisfaction. We saw evidence of an expanding diaconate, new directions for the rap groups, exciting ideas from our emerging Christian Social Action Committee. Our contentment with the past was enhanced by our attraction to the future. By the end of the exhausting evening, we had patted ourselves on the back, argued out our superficial differences, elected three new leaders, and set our sights on the future."

NEW YORK, NEW YORK MCC Hispana

Pastor Jose Mojica and editor Ricardo Zurita from MCC Hispana in New York City invite all those who have Spanish speaking persons in their congregations around the country to write to them to be on the mailing list for their sharp and very significant publication, "Gay Hispano." The address is "Gay Hispano," POB 110, Peter Suyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009. Artículos, poemas o cartas inéditas, son publicadas en este boletín. Pastor Mojica writes, "Todos unidos lo lograremos. Unete a nosotros en nuestra guerra titanica contra la ignorancia, el prejuicio, la discriminacion y el sentido de culpa que tienen algunos."

NEW YORK, NEW YORK MCC Brooklyn

Alpha and Omega MCC Brooklyn chartered a bus and twenty-five of them climbed aboard for a 386 mile trip to Pittsburgh to join 132 others for a conference on Special Ministries: Alcoholism, Drugs, Prisoners, Aged, Handicapped, Terminally Ill, "The entire program had a great impact that I'm sure will remain with those of our congregation who went," writes one member of Alpha and Omega. In May (20-22) Alpha-Omega will host their fellow MCC members from the Northeast District for the spring District Conference. Their church publication "Wisdom" is a treasure-house of NEWS and well written stories. One gets the impression from it that working with their pastor, the Rev. Dee Jackson, the Alpha-Omega MCC Brooklyn Mission is really a church, people praying, witnessing, working together.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK MCC Manhattan

Like many MCC congregations, MCC New York is struggling to adjust to the use of non-masculist-non-sexist language. Earlier this year their congregation was interrupted twice. The interruption was by a young man loudly proclaiming that references to "Mother God" were a sin. The second was by a woman who verbally attacked a minister who had used the word "Fahter." An editorial in the MCC New York newsletter states, "We must stand firm in God's House that threats and blackmail won't work. Many many come to God's church wounded, some come looking to be wounded. Please pray that the healing hand of Saviour Jesus Christ will heal all our wounds." It was reported in the same issue that the young man "has since rejoined us with a promise of no more threats, and the woman, of course, will always be loved and welcomed here . . ." Their newsletter, the "Mustard Seed," reflects a growing, active church, people serving each other, working as an involved Christian community with their pastor, The Rev. Gil Lincoln. Earlier this year Rev. Lincoln was formally installed as pastor of the 200 member congregation by the Rev. Howard Gaas, District Coordinator. Many other well known New Yorkers attended the celebration: Bishop Robert Clements of the Church of the Beloved Disciple, Dr. and Mrs. Jules Manford, the parents of Morty Manford; Jean O'Leary of the National Gay Task Force; and Dr. George Weinberg, the noted psychiatrist.

FT. WORTH, TEXAS

Pastor Jerry Sloan led a rally against the Fort Worth "Star-Telegram." About 45 of the Fort Worth congregation participated in the march protesting anti-gay cartoons and editorials. On March 28, Rev. Sloan and members of the congregation were graciously given equal time on a full length television show, produced by themselves, to present a

rebuttal to slanderous remarks made in a program earlier from that station. More than eighty people attended dedication Sunday services, where letters of congratulation were read from Governor Briscoe and Senator John Tower. Famous visitors in March included the Rev. Lee Carlton on his way to England and Rev. Doctor Norman Pittenger, visiting from England.

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

The weekly calendar of events at MCC Nashville is a full one as can be seen from the congregational newsletter, "Maranatha." Monday, Games Night; Tuesday, Bible Study and Discussion; Wednesday, open rap; Thursday, Charismatic Prayer Meeting; Friday, Deacon and Exhorter Classes, Board Meetings, Alcoholics Together, Al-Anon; Saturday, weekly pot-luck dinners.

KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

In its first four weeks, the Knoxville group attracted 31 men and women, received a piano and mimeograph machine, communion supplies, professionally painted signs for their meeting place, and posters for around the city.

HOUSTON, TEXAS

Rev. Jeri Harvey, formerly pastor of MCC Oklahoma City, arrived early in January to take on the duties of pastor for the Houston congregation which had been without a full time pastor for many months. The Rev. John H. Hose, Vice Moderator of the Board of Elders, presided at Rev. Harvey's installation in February. The National Evangelistic Team, led by the Rev. Ron Anderson, presented a four day spiritual renewal in preparation for the installation. Rita Wanstrom, who guided the work of the church during the long period without a pastor, has resigned from the board of directors to enter the exhorter training program.

MID-CENTRAL DISTRICT

The Rev. Art Ramirez, District Coordinator of the Mid-Central District, reports that the district conference over the Memorial Day weekend was very productive. The theme of the conference, held at St. Louis, was Christian Social Action. Adam DeBaugh, Chairperson of the Christian Social Action Commission, was guest speaker and facilitator for the workshop on that subject. The workshop was well received and "there is great enthusiasm in this district for social concerns," Rev. Ramirez indicated.

The district voted to finance a month-long tour of Mr. DeBaugh in which he will visit each of the ten congregations in the district. It will culminate in Wichita where MCC Wichita is going to have a big "coming out party," according to Pastor Ramirez. "We've

never had any extensive publicity before for our church. We are going to start the ball rolling when Adam comes and then go all out for a big Gay Pride Week observance."

The district conference, which hosted 240 people for a sit-down on Saturday night, must have been a lively affair. There were numerous workshops in addition to the Christian Social Action workshop. Rev. Bob Arthur, National Director of the Fellowship Prison Ministry, conducted a well-received workshop on prison ministry. In the workshop on Innovative Ministries, Billy Fitzgerald of MCC of Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, conducted a complete orientation on the establishment of a local crisis intervention center and presented a standard operating procedure booklet for setting up a peer counseling operation.

It was recommended to the Board of Elders that MCC Iliamo be named a Mission and that Boulder, CO be recognized as a Study Group.

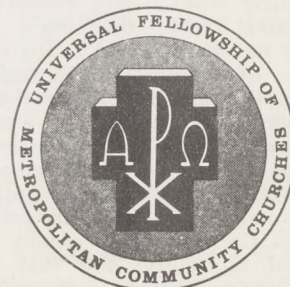
The Conference granted a love offering of \$435.00 to the Rev. Ron Burcham and his spouse, Bobby Brown, formerly of the district. Ron and Bobby are now in Sydney, Australia, where Ron is pastor of MCC Sydney. The district also granted a love offering of \$200 to the Fellowship and it was pointed out with pride that in the last nine months (since Rev. Ramirez has been district coordinator) all congregations have had a 100% on-time record in paying their tithes to the Fellowship.

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

MCC New Orleans will be dedicating their church home at 1000 Frenchmen Street in July with Rev. Perry on hand for the ceremony.

NOTE

Congregation Beth Chayim Chadashim observed a special Havdallah Service on Saturday June 4, 1977 celebrating their fifth anniversary. It was held at Temple Emmanuel in Beverly Hills, CA.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Please increase Portland's order from 50 to 75 next month. We never have enough to go around. Please send 25 each of your twin pamphlets, "Homosexuals and the Bible" and "Homosexuality in the Light of Biblical Language and Culture." Also send 50 copies of the August 1976 IN UNITY if you can spare them for our evangelism work.

Rev. Austine Amerine
Pastor, MCC Portland

Greetings from Tucson MCC. We have received our "Winter" issue of IN UNITY. Enclosed please find a check to cover our copies.

We out here in the desert really appreciate IN UNITY. I personally would like to commend you for the fine job you are doing.

H. "Buff" Fisher
Worship Coordinator
MCC Tucson

We would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks for the wonderful job you and your staff are doing. In isolated and semi isolated places such as Fresno one of the few ways we have of keeping in touch with the mainstream of the Fellowship's activities is through your publication. This is a job you handle with the greatest of clarity and ability.

The informative articles submitted to your (our) publication give much food for thought, prayer, and self growth.

Here in Fresno we are a new and small group in the Fellowship, but one which the Lord is working with in a mighty way.

Enclosed please find a check. We love the enjoyment and education this publication will afford our group.

Gary R. Lewis
Worship Coordinator
MCC Fresno

NOTED THEOLOGIAN TO ADDRESS CONFERENCE

Gregory Baum, professor of Theology and Religious Studies, at St. Michaels College in the University of Toronto, has accepted an invitation to address a convocation during the General Conference of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, to be held on Sunday, August 8, this year in Denver.

Dr. Baum, a recently laicized priest of the Augustinian Order within the Roman Catholic Church, has a wide reputation throughout the world as a progressive, reform theologian. He is generally recognized as one of the leading contributing theologians to the work of the Vatican II Ecumenical Council during the sixties.

While he has subjected a wide variety of current issues to theological scrutiny, Dr. Baum has spent considerable time on the church's attitude toward Jews, on women's role in the church, on celibacy for the clergy, and on the church's need for radical renewal and involvement in the pressing issues in the world.

He has spoken and written on the subject of homosexuality, calling to question the church's traditional theology and policy on the subject. In a talk given in Toronto in 1974, he questioned the traditional rationale that homosexuality was contrary to "nature," stating that human nature has been always categorized in Christianity as ideally being a spirit of mutuality, and that there is much evidence that homosexual love shows as much potential as heterosexual love for leading individuals to that ideal of mutuality.

NOTE

The May 30, 1977 issue of *Christianity and Crisis* includes at least four articles which may be of interest to gay Christian readers.

Included in the issue are: a survey of denominational stances on homosexuals by Tracy Early; an article on homophobia by Jim Harrison; the Lesbian Christian experience by Nancy Krody; and an article on counseling experiences with gay people by Peggy Way.

(This issue is available from the Universal Fellowship Press at \$1.00 each.)

NOTICE

Those churches interested in having the Reverend Father Norman Pittenger speak in their churches or towns during his 1978 speaking tour should notify Reverend Mickley at the Fellowship office immediately. His itinerary is being firmed up now.

He will arrive in New York on March 7, 1978 and leave for London from Los Angeles on April 18, 1978. Requests will be forwarded to Father Pittenger and replies will come from him.

It is hoped that many MCC churches will arrange autograph parties in connection with possible visits in order to promote sales of Dr. Pittenger's new book, *Gay Lifestyles*, which the Universal Fellowship Press is publishing and releasing in August 1977.

UPDATE

Continued from page 9

"WHAT RIGHT IS THERE TO CORRUPT OUR CHILDREN?" The hysterical campaign ended in Miami with the sick slogan of the winners still ringing in the nightmares of the 90,000 Dade County residents who thought gay people should have employment and housing rights. 200,000 of their neighbors (the normal people according to Ms. Bryant), fellow Christians and Jews who believe "Jewish ethical teachings state we should keep away from neighbors who are immoral"—voted to take away the guarantee of civil rights to homosexuals.

"600,000 Frenchmen can't be wrong the old saying goes. History will pronounce its judgment on 200,000 Dade Countians," said one civil rights leader.

The day after the vote, the Rev. Joseph Gilbert, pastor of MCC Miami, reported to IN UNITY that there were a lot of firings in Miami that day, "mostly people who'd been active in the campaign."

"As we see Anita Bryant turning her attention to other states, we must learn one thing," he said, "from what we saw happen in Dade County. We in the MCC's everywhere must do our part to make sure that the Anti-Save Our Children campaign remains in the hands of the people and is not given just to the professionals. Certainly the fate of the Dade County Ordinance reminds us that while grace is free, it isn't cheap, and that the homosexual community has a lot of homework to do."

It is my understanding that the Fellowship Offices were to be notified when the individual churches made their contributions to Riverside. We have just sent them a check to \$100 in payment of our pledge made at General Conference in Washington D.C. last summer. We've wondered how things have worked out for Riverside financially and otherwise. Will member churches be given some accounting at some point in time? It would help us here in Seattle to know how to better pray for them.

Rev. W. Lanchester
Pastor, MCC Seattle

It has been sometime since I wrote you to tell you of the wonderful blessings the fire of our church has caused. It's as I said before, "What the devil causes to happen, God will make a blessing from."

So far we have received a total offering from you, our family of approx. \$3,700 with more always coming in. This along with our insurance of \$4,800 and the donations from our own congregation gives us a total of over \$10,000 for our building fund. We also have much more pledged that we have not received.

We are meeting in a bar called the "Red Shade". The owners agreed to let us meet for just a couple of times after the fire and here we are six months later! Our attendance is starting to climb. After the fire our attendance was at 30 people and since the fire our attendance has doubled.

We've been able to set up our office again with a lot of the office equipment we needed obtained through donations. We have a part time secretary who has been working overtime to start setting things up in some kind of order and the structure of the church has finally taken form.

As for the people of our congregation, things are happening there also. We have a spirit of unity I've not seen before. They do not fight nor argue with one another, rather they are seeking the self-same goals of a church for God. Many people were either scared away or were left feeling helpless by the fire, but, others saw it as a challenge to start new for Christ and they are succeeding greatly. All this is due to your vigils and prayers. I, as a Pastor, no longer find it difficult to get help, rather each individual takes on their personal responsibility to the Lord and the church has been a basic element in starting or encouraging gay groups to form in the area.

Our biggest blessing was to see your response to our situation. Blessings coming to us through your prayers and tears in our eyes as we received letters from all around the world.

I hope this gives you an idea of what you, as a family, have done for us. We ask for your continued prayers as we also pray for our family.

Rev. Deborah Gendron
Pastor, Trinity MCC
Riverside, CA

LOVING SOMEONE GAY

DON CLARK (Celestial Arts)

A BOOK REVIEW by REV. RICHARD R. MICKLEY

The author of *Loving Someone Gay* is, among other things, a clinical psychologist in the San Francisco area. Don Clark is, moreover, a gay therapist who offers sensitive, intelligent guidance to gay people and those who care about them. He makes no secret of his opinion that the best therapist for a gay person is a gay therapist.

The first chapter explains how it is to be gay today in our part of the world. The second chapter offers suggestions for making it a more growthful experience. The third chapter talks to fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, good friends, and others who love someone gay and want to know how to become better related. The final chapter is for professionals who want to improve their work with gay people.

"Mystery and misinformation about the unknown breed fear. Fear feeds prejudice and cruelty," writes Dr. Clark. And he proceeds through 192 pages in an attempt to dispel mystery and ward off prejudice and cruelty. "The reasons why some people grow up Gay and some non-Gay are varied and numerous. Nor are they of much importance...We need our separate identity until we are perceived as full equals who can integrate with heterosexuals in a pluralistic society."

To be quite frank, the book is touching. That's the best word I can think of. It's just full of really touching, real life stories of people who are easy to identify with. Once in a while there is a shocker, "Today there are still few people aware that there are Gay people in prison and in mental hospitals because they are guilty of crimes such as kissing on the street."

The chapter on "Being Gay" spells it like it is: "Gay people are regularly stripped of civil and human rights and it happens so regularly that most people don't notice it."

The book gives you the feeling: "This person has been there. He knows how it feels. He's speaking from the vantage point of knowing how something touches his life and others like him." But it makes one think of both the good and the unfortunate when he says, "*For those of us who survive -- and there are more and more of us who do -- the world is rich and full.*" And that's what makes the book so good. It's realistic and optimistic. It shows that Gay life can be rich and full and good. He speaks of the effort of the Metropolitan Community Church to contribute to this.

For me, the best chapter is the one addressed directly to other people. First he deals separately at some length with "You Wills" and "You Shoulds" for parents; then children; spouses; brothers and sisters; and friends. I remember last year Dr. Norman Pittenger asked me to write a book for parents of gay people because so many people had asked him to do it and he didn't have the time. Now I feel Dr. Clark has filled a real need -- superbly.

The tide could be turned in America. Anita Bryant would be a laughing stock from the orange groves of California to Florida's withering trees. I really think the face of the nation would be lifted and a new era of light and liberty would dawn on our land, and perhaps around the world, if all the homophobes, all those whose lives are linked with a gay person, all those who are in some way influenced by the likes of Anita Bryant could read this book with an open mind.

I'm sure it's the best on the market. But as always with good books, all too few will discover it and even fewer will read it and let it help them be agents for a better world.

"Amazing Grace...that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now am found." "It expresses my experiences as a Gay person so well," writes Dr. Clark. "I am glad I rediscovered my Gay identity in time." "I like being able to be myself, to respect the differences in people, and to look on the human world with a sense of compassion."

I really don't suppose the whole world would take on that outlook if the whole world would read this book. But wouldn't it be nice if it did?

(This book will be on sale in the General Conference Bookstore and available thereafter from the Universal Fellowship Press.)

SOME ADDITIONAL BOOKS WHICH
HAVE COME TO OUR ATTENTION:

FAMILIAR FACES, HIDDEN LIVES, Dr. Howard Brown, (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich) 1976. 246 pages.

Dr. Howard Brown, health services administrator of New York City under Mayor Lindsey, completed this book after he "came out" publicly in 1973 and before his sudden death in 1975. In this book for the first time the heterosexual reader is given a true picture of the real world of most homosexuals.

JESUS: THE STORY OF HIS LIFE, Walter Barnett, (Nelson-Hall) 1976. 274 pages.

Taking advantage of the significantly increased understanding of the sources made possible by modern scholarship, and using his background as a legal scholar, Walter Barnett has produced a readable and plausible biography of Jesus which reinforces the meaning of his life and message in the twentieth century.

GAY AMERICAN HISTORY: LESBIANS AND GAY MEN IN THE USA, Jonathan Katz, (Thomas Y. Crowell) 1976. 690 pages.

Most readers and reviewers acclaim the book as a scholarly work. MCC readers may be disappointed at its leftward tilt and obvious omissions.

HOMOSEXUALS IN HISTORY, A. L. Rowse, (Macmillan) 1977. 346 pages.

A serious look by an eminent historian at creativity in homosexuals throughout the ages. Richard the Lionhearted, Michelangelo, King James I, Frederick the Great, Tchaikovsky, Oscar Wilde, Somerset Maugham, Walt Whitman, Henry James, and scores of others.

ENTRAPPED: AN ACCUSED HOMOSEXUAL LOOKS AT AMERICAN JUSTICE, Edward Eugene Baskett, (Lawrence Hill) 1976. 151 pages.

In Long Beach, CA an attractive young man, Edward Baskett was entrapped and brought to court. He chose to fight back. This book is an eloquent appeal to the general public against the injustice of the police and the courts which hound not only homosexuals, but other unpopular minorities. It shows how the tragic flaw in the American criminal justice system has left many ruined lives in the wake of its blazing righteousness.

THE HOMOSEXUALS, Alan Ebert, (Macmillan) 1977. 322 pages.

Seventeen homosexual men speak for themselves, freely. They talk about their lives, their parents, lovers, wives, and children. They talk about what being gay means to them — in their social and sexual lives, in their careers, and as they age. "They talk so honestly about their lives that you sometimes have to stop reading and marvel at the layers of emotion unpeeled and spread out before

you." (*Library Journal*) "No gay novel or clinical study I know has captured the realities of gay men's lives better than this series of interviews." (*Insight: a Quarterly of Gay Catholic Opinion*) This book will undoubtedly be an eye-opener for heterosexuals who wonder what 'those people' actually do..." (*Publishers Weekly*)

FROM THE CLOSETS TO THE COURTS, Ruth Simpson, (Penguin) 1976. 180 pages.

A first hand report on what it means to be a lesbian today. Ruth Simpson exposes the mechanism of oppression. She, of course, writes from a feminist point of view, but attempts to establish a unity of purpose and methodology "for all oppressed groups in our oppressive society." Family, social attitudes, feminism, church, psychiatry, law enforcement are among the topics which come under her scrutiny in the "important book," (as it is described in the *Library Journal*.)

BY HER OWN ADMISSION: A LESBIAN MOTHER'S FIGHT TO KEEP HER SON, Gifford Gibson and Mary Jo Risher (the mother), (Doubleday), June 17, 1977. 276 pages.

A true story about what has been called "the ultimate homosexual tragedy." A really heart-wringing account of how a mother's ageless rights are destroyed — just because she happens to be a lesbian. The case is still being pushed toward the Supreme Court of the United States. Mary Jo Risher wants to keep Richard Risher. Richard Risher says, "I hope you keep me, mom."

WORDS AND WOMEN: NEW LANGUAGE IN NEW TIMES, Casey Miller and Kate Swift, (Doubleday) 1977. 197 pages.

As we all too well know, few topics today arouse sharper controversy than the subject of sexual prejudice in language. This book gives a brief summary of the whole question, a well researched survey of the various ways in which sex bias is built into the English language.

AN EVANGELICAL LOOK AT HOMOSEXUALITY, Ralph Blair. 1977. 16 pages.

Dr. Blair, a psychotherapist in New York City, is Director of the Homosexual Counseling Center in New York and Board President of Evangelicals Concerned. In this excellent pamphlet, revised in an attractive new edition, Dr. Blair admirably describes the compatibility of being a born-again Christian, a Bible-believing Christian, a person with a naturally developed homo-sexuality, a person who accepts himself or herself as Jesus Christ has accepted them, and being a person who lives a life which includes responsible homosexual behavior.

HOMOSEXUAL CATHOLICS: A PRIMER FOR DISCUSSION, (Dignity), 1977.

This new edition of the popular question and answer book contains additional materials. Written by Father Tom Oddo, Father Robert Nugent, and Sister Jeannine Gramick, this book has been a helpful summary of contemporary Catholic thought on homosexuality for thousands of readers. The three authors have had extensive experience in counseling and ministering to the gay community in Dignity chapters.

AFTER YOU'RE OUT: PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF GAY MEN AND LESBIAN WOMEN, Karla Jay and Allen Young, (Links) 1975. 296 pages.

By the same editors who gave us OUT OF THE CLOSETS, this book is the first to deal with the realities of living in the world as an open gay person. It deals with everything from "butch and fem" to aging, taking a look at alcoholism, bisexuality, hookers, therapy, survival, — and many other things in between.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN ENGLISHMAN, "Y", (Paul Elek, London) 1975. 176 pages.

A well-known English author writes under the pen name "Y" to tell the completely honest and explicit account of the emotional and sexual part of his life which had been kept secret. It demonstrates how a life intensely intellectual can be completely dominated by sex, and how impractical is the ideal of sublimation.

THE YOUNG IN ONE ANOTHER'S ARMS, Jane Rule, (Doubleday) 1977. 204 pages.

A novel by a gifted writer, the author of LESBIAN IMAGES, who knows love and is no crusader for anything but an intelligent recognition of love's varieties. A cool analysis of relationships between men and women, women and women, children and parents.



NOTE:

Karla Jay and Allen Young, who have given the world two of the best informed books on the gay lifestyle, *Out of the Closets* and *After You're Out*, are conducting a survey in preparation for another book. Anyone who would like to participate in the Sexuality Survey, and it's important that those with deep Christian commitment do participate, write for a gay male questionnaire, or a gay female questionnaire. Write to: Survey, Box 98, Orange, MC 01364

INSTITUTIONAL MINISTRY REPORT

by Rev. Bob Arthur

A lot has been happening with the Board of Institutional Ministry this last few months. We have added several new area representatives to our personnel around the country, and we have increased the number of prisoners we are working with as well as the number of institutions they are located in. At last count we are working in 128 institutions with about 775 prisoners. Several are enrolled in our correspondence courses, and several have been released on parole and discharged. Recently our new area representative here in Los Angeles, David Richards was able to get weekly worship services started in the county jail system in the "queen's tank" with great success. As many as 90 prisoners show up each Sunday morning at 9:00 for services, and he is also now going into the isolation tanks to do counseling work.

In February I was privileged to visit with the North East District Conference with their special emphasis on institutional ministry. As a result we have several new people involved with our work there in the Northeast. Enthusiasm was high, and contacts since that time indicate that it was not just a temporary enthusiasm. On the way back from Pittsburgh, I took an Amtrak rail-pass, and visited with our churches in Indianapolis, St. Louis, Kansas City, and Albuquerque. While in Indianapolis, I was able to visit one of our prisoners at the Indiana State Reformatory at Pendleton. The work there in Indianapolis is growing well under Byron Williams' good leadership.

In St. Louis we had an informational meeting with those interested in prison work after the worship service on the Sunday I was there, and several people attended and indicated an interest in helping our representative there, Sparky Pagel, with her work. We were saddened to lose Jim Lewey as our acting chaplain there, but in his preparation as an exhorter along with all of his other responsibilities, he felt he just couldn't do it justice any longer. We do want to extend our

sincere thanks, however, for a job well done in the time that he served us.

While in Kansas City, I was able to visit with a group of people who were very excited about prison work, and as a result, we now have a team of people there working with prisoners. We also have a new area representative there, Tom Hodges, who is acting as the chair for that team. I had a great reception by the *Kansas City Star*, which interviewed me while I was there. I also found a warm but cautious reception by the assistant supervisor and the chaplain of the Kansas State Prison. I look forward to a good work getting started there in the near future.

In Albuquerque I found Steve Quesnel beginning to build a good work in the institutional ministry there. He had just broken into the New Mexico system, and we are now getting interested prisoners from there, too. Our work in Albuquerque is small, but thriving, and we were proud to have Steve as part of our team.

Upon my return, Troy Perry informed me that he would be one of those attending the meeting at the White House with the Presidential staff concerned with the gay problems issue. He asked me to prepare a position paper about the situation of gays in prison, which I did, and it was presented at that time. We have been granted a hearing, now, by the U.S. Justice Department, and the Attorney General said he would be present. Hopefully, we will be getting the ruling of the Federal Bureau of Prisons reversed and be allowed to minister in federal prisons as we are in most state prisons now. Pray for us.

I am really excited by the growth we are experiencing in this ministry. However, we need help to continue to grow. If any of you reading this article would like to get involved in this ministry to our incarcerated brothers and sister, please contact your local area representative, or this office, and we will gladly put you to work.



COMMITTEE ON CHURCH HYMNODY

The Committee on Church Hymnody has been the Fellowship's "quiet" committee this past year, but it has by no means been inactive! Much behind the scenes groundwork has been in progress since General Conference in Washington, and beginning after conference in Denver the Committee will enter the more active stages leading to production.

The committee is organized into two subcommittees: the Editorial, which does the actual technical work and all text and music editing, and the Advisory, which serves in a critical review capacity and as a liaison between the Editorial group and the local congregations of the Fellowship.

The Editorial committee has met four times since last conference to discuss basic questions concerning the new hymnal; certain basic decisions have been made:

- The new hymnal will be "inclusive" in language and will use many Biblical images to portray God in human terminology.

- It will be broad in its appeal, drawing its material from all the traditions of the Christian faith and from a wide variety of musical styles.

- Musical notation for guitar accompaniment will be included for many of the hymns.

- Some hymn texts and musical settings original to MCC will be included.

- The hymnal will generally follow the "church year", but will include a large section of General Hymns, and also a section of Service Music.

A special questionnaire has been prepared to send to all pastors, music leaders and choir directors to solicit their ideas and to help the committee determine where the Fellowship is at present in the area of church hymnody. This questionnaire should be received in the local congregations in late June or early July. Hopefully, next year, the committee will be able to interact with the local churches on the district level as the actual work of putting the hymnal together begins. A full report of this year's activities will be made at General Conference in Denver.

The Committee welcomes the ideas, thoughts, comments and suggestions of all interested persons; please write to the Chairperson, the Rev. Larry Bernier, at Post Office Box 5570, Los Angeles, California, 90055.

INTERNATIONAL GENERAL CONFERENCE

THE 8TH GENERAL CONFERENCE OF
THE UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP OF
METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES

DENVER, COLORADO
August 1-7, 1977

DAILY WORSHIP SERVICES AT:

7:45 a.m. (Tuesday through Saturday)

Preaching: Bonnie Daniel, Don Pederson, Jim Hill,
Larry Uhrig, Jim Harris

9:00 a.m. (Monday through Saturday)

10:00 a.m. (Sunday)

Preaching: Charlie Arehart, Joseph Gilbert, Nancy
Wilson, Dee Jackson, Stan Roberts, Susan Seville,
Troy Perry

7:30 p.m. (Monday through Sunday)

Preaching: Austin Amerine, Jim Glycer, Stan Harris,
Jan Weymouth, Freda Smith, John Hose, Jim
Sandmire

THEOLOGIAN GREGORY BAUM

Will speak to the Conference Sunday at 2:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE, COMMISSION, BOARD MEETINGS

10:00 a.m.—12:00 noon daily (Monday through
Thursday)

GENERAL CONFERENCE BUSINESS SESSIONS

2:00 p.m.—5:30 p.m. daily (Monday through
Saturday)

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE BOOKSTORE

Featuring a wide variety of new books, will be
open in the Conference Hotel Monday through
Saturday only (Not Sunday)
(Books for individuals, books for bookstores)

THE COSMOPOLITAN HOTEL,

The setting of the General Conference, is not only
a clean and beautiful hotel, but located in the center
of Denver activity and only 20 minutes from
Stapleton International Airport.



Call BankTravel for your Airline Reservations

Presently, the least expensive way to travel to Denver by air would be:

NIGHT COACH TRAVEL (Not available from every city) requires the red eye specials, normally flying between 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.

BI-CENTENNIAL FARES, requires that you be gone a minimum of 8 days, with a maximum stay of 30 days. Capacity is limited on most carriers so we advise that you book this fare early. The BI-CENTENNIAL ticket must be paid for 10 days after it is booked. Say you booked your reservations on April 1st the ticket must be written by the 10th of April. Once the reservations have been made any changes require that the ticket be rewritten and no changes are accepted by the carriers 14 days before commencement of your trip.

Presently, all **group fares** are to be cancelled as of March 31st. Some carriers might refile for group fares so this might be a possibility.

Call 1-800-835-2724